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Rachel Hatch

Illinois Wesleyan University

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Cain and Abel, Hinduism, Topics of Religion Colloquia

January 20, 2010

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. – As part of the 11th annual Religion Colloquia, Illinois Wesleyan University will welcome two religion scholars, speaking on the topics of the tale of Cain and Abel, and Hinduism in colonial India.

The colloquia, or series of lectures, will be held from 4-5 p.m. in Room 205 of the Center for Liberal Arts (310 Beecher St., Bloomington). The events are free and open to the public.

Monday, February 15

Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Jason Fuller from DePauw University (Indiana) will present “Hinduism’s ‘Eastern Savior’: the Rehabilitation of Chaitanya in Colonial Bengal.” Chaitanya was a monk and social reformer in eastern India during the early 16th century.

Fuller has a doctorate in religious studies from the University of Pennsylvania. He is the recipient of grants from the university, as well as from the American Institute of Indian Studies. Frequently conducting fieldwork in what is now Kolkata, Fuller is the author of several recent articles in the *Journal of Hindu Studies*, *Teaching Theology and Religion* and the *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*.

Monday, March 8

Assistant Professor of Religious Studies Silviu Bunta from the University of Dayton will present “Whose Son was Cain Anyway?: Genesis 4:1 as a Case of Textual Insinuation.” The story of Cain and Abel can be found in many religions, appearing in the Bible, the Torah and the Qur’an. Some versions allege Cain was the son of the serpent in the Garden of Eden.

Bunta, a native of Romania, holds a doctorate from Marquette University (Wisconsin). He specializes in the study of Judaism and Christian origins, focusing particularly on mystical trends in early literature not included in canon writing, but attributed to biblical figures. Bunta has recently published several articles in the field of Jewish and Christian mysticism in volumes and scholarly journals such as *Henoch*, the *Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*, *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* and the *Journal for the Study of Judaism*.

Contact: Rachel Hatch, (309) 556-3960